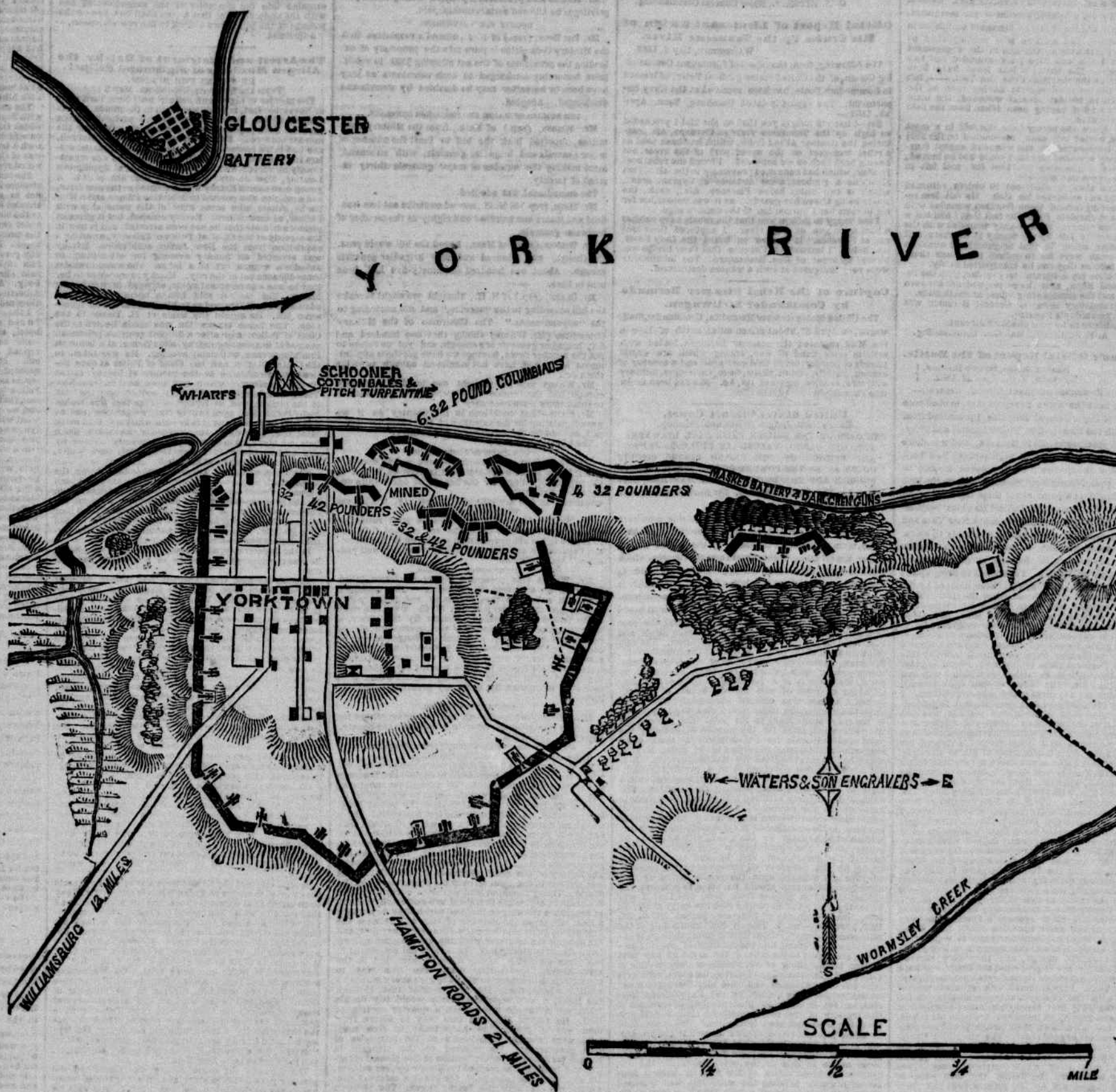


# THE REBEL DEFENCES AT YORKTOWN.

The Formidable Character of the Rebel Fortifications Around Yorktown.



...to the protection of the fort, and the Monitor, although not injured, did not attempt to follow her. The government had adopted these vessels, and the question back to the commissioners, to which other eminent naval and other scientific men would be added. The government was not obstinately wedded to any scheme, but having received the report of the commissioners, would consider and propose to Parliament what they considered necessary, fully confident that it would be received in the same spirit as before. (Cheers.)

The Duke of Cambridge confirmed the statement of the noble earl, and expressed his opinion that, after all, forts would be found to be indispensable. Sir W. Armstrong, who was very cautious, and did not like to express any opinion before he had actually tested it, told him that it was allowed, which he was to be, he was anxious that he could construct six hundred pound gun which would produce the same results as two thousand two hundred yards, but of at two hundred, although the three hundred pound gun weighed twenty tons. Sir W. Armstrong said he could make machinery to work it with the aid of only five men. He himself had no doubt that the present limit would be obtained before six months had elapsed, and he hoped the government would be allowed to proceed steadily and persistently, unobscured by any momentary accident or occasional result, for to pause would be to be distressed by other countries. (Hear, hear.)

The Earl of Exmouth thought that the government was right in not proceeding too hastily, but he hoped they would not proceed too tardily. He expressed an opinion in favor of the ultimate superiority of the gun, and thought that forts would be essential and cheaper than ships. They would not, the least free for other duties, and afford protection to it if weak or disabled. All nations were now eager to construct an iron fleet, but we must at once use our greater financial and manufacturing resources, and be the first what it would, at once place the country in a position of maritime superiority.

The Duke of Somerset defended the policy of the Admiralty, and observed that if they were to do all that was urged upon them, and be swayed by every popular panic, they would incur great expense, with doubtful results. They had already begun to build fifteen iron-plated ships before they had tried one, and he thought this was quite enough at once. They now saw their way further, and were prepared to proceed with Captain Ches' and other plans.

On motion of the Earl of Glanville, their lordships adjourned until Tuesday, 20th inst.

## EVACUATION OF YORKTOWN.

Important Despatches from General McClellan.

Precipitate Flight of the Rebel Army.

One Hundred Thousand Rebels on the Run.

The Rear Guard of the Enemy Over-taken by Our Forces.

Cavalry and Artillery Engagement Near Williamsburg.

The Rebels Driven from Their Position and Twenty-five Prisoners Taken.

PROBABLE CAPTURE OF THE TOWN.

Interesting Accounts from Our Special Correspondents.

Operations of the Enemy Previous to the Evacuation.

Planting the Stars and Stripes on the Historic Ground.

SEVENTY-ONE HEAVY CANNON CAPTURED

The Guns from the Merrimac Mounted at Gloucester.

Immense Strength of the Rebel Fortifications.

Water Demoralization of the Rebel Army.

BARBAROUS CONDUCT OF THE ENEMY.

Arrangements of the Rebels to Blow Up the Works.

THE SCIENTIFIC PLANS OF GEN. MCCLELLAN.

Brilliant Achievement of the Union Arms.

IMPORTANCE OF THE UNION SUCCESSES.

Important Movements of the French Minister.

RE MEMBER'S ARRIVAL AT YORKTOWN, &c., &c., &c.

Despatches from General McClellan.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, May 4—11:30 A. M.

RE MEMBER'S ARRIVAL AT YORKTOWN, &c., &c., &c.

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and barbarous conduct, in placing torpedoes within the abandoned works, near wells and springs, and near flag-staffs, magazines, telegraph offices, in carpet bags, barrels of flour, &c.

We have not lost many men in this manner—some four or five killed, and perhaps a dozen wounded. I shall make the prisoners remove them at their own peril.

G. B. McCLELLAN, Major General.

Despatch from Colonel Astor.

The following despatch from Colonel Astor was yesterday received in this city by Mr. Parit, President of the Chamber of Commerce:

YORKTOWN, Va., May 4, 1862.

The rebels evacuated this place at four o'clock this morning, keeping up a brisk cannonade to the last moment, leaving all their heavy guns, eighty in number, with their ammunition, also large amounts of material of war of every kind, abandoned, burned or sunk.

Devil, Johnston and Lee were present, uniting in opinion that McClellan's disposition of his forces and artillery had made the place untenable. Magruder furiously and publicly urged fight. The fortifications were very extensive and formidable, and their force had been large. An assault upon them before bombardment would have produced great carnage, and might have failed.

Our gunboat flotilla has passed up the river, followed by large bodies of troops in transports; also several columns are moving rapidly along York river. We hope to come up with them before they can reach West Point. Our army is in the finest condition and best spirits; the rebel army much demoralized.

J. J. ASTOR, Col. and A. D. C.

Cavalry and Artillery Engagement Near Williamsburg.

HEADQUARTERS, NEAR WILLIAMSBURG, May 4—Evening.

The advance of the forces, under command of General Stoneman, with the view of ascertaining the position of the enemy, reached this place, two and a half miles from Williamsburg, about two o'clock this afternoon, on the road from Yorktown. The country, in most instances, was laid desolate, and but few of the houses are occupied.

On emerging from a cover of woods we came in view of Williamsburg and the enemy's earthworks. At the time no guns were visible on the enemy's works, but a regiment of cavalry could be seen approaching, about one mile off, in line of battle.

Captain Gibbons' reserve battery was then ordered to the front to open on the enemy's approaching cavalry, while a portion of the Sixth cavalry were deployed as skirmishers to the right and left. The fire from the battery was very effective on the enemy's cavalry, but never changed their course.

About two hundred yards to the right of Gibbons' battery was an earthwork, which had all the appearance of being deserted, when all of a sudden our troops were opened upon by a deadly fire from artillery posted behind the works. At the same time the rebel cavalry continued advancing until they were checked by a charge made by a portion of the First and Sixth cavalry, which was performed in a most admirable manner. In more instances than one it was a hand to hand encounter with the enemy, but, strange to relate, none of our men were made prisoners, while we captured about twenty-five of the enemy, among whom is Captain Frank Lee, of the Third Florida infantry.

Captain Gibbons had fourteen horses killed. Lieutenant De Wolf was mortally wounded. One gun was lost by sticking fast in the mud. Lieutenant Benton, of the First cavalry, and ten men of the same regiment, were wounded. Lieutenant McClellan, of the Sixth cavalry, was slightly wounded, as were also twelve others. Lieutenant Colonel Kneass, of the First cavalry, had his horse shot under him while engaged in a hand to hand encounter

with two of the enemy. He escaped with a few slight bruises.

Private Noble (Irish), of Major Barker's McClellan Dragoons, had his horse killed and was severely wounded in the leg by the explosion of a torpedo, while passing through Yorktown.

The rebel cavalry was forced by our men to abandon their position, but the want of infantry prevented our men from advancing on the enemy's works. It being evident that it was useless to attempt further operations, the troops fell back about two hundred yards to await the arrival of infantry.

General Hancock's brigade soon after arrived, but it was deemed advisable to defer further operations until to-morrow.

We have information that the enemy are still on the retreat beyond Williamsburg.

The rear guard of the enemy is very strong, as was shown to-day.

Sketch of General Stoneman.

Brigadier General and Acting Major General George Stoneman is a native and citizen of New York, and was appointed a cadet of West Point from that State in the year 1842. He graduated on the 30th of June, 1846, standing No. 33 in his class, in which there were thirty-nine members. Among his classmates are the names of Major General G. B. McClellan, Acting Major General J. G. Foster, Jesse L. Reno, D. N. Couch, T. Seymour, and others; Brigadier Generals S. D. Sturges, Jas. Oakes, J. N. Palmer and others, in the Union army, and some few who have joined the rebel cause. On the 1st of July, 1846, he was promoted Brigadier General of the First dragoons, and on the 12th of July, 1847, received his commission of full second lieutenant of that regiment. In July, 1848, he was promoted to a first lieutenantcy, and, in January, 1855, was appointed aide to Major Gen. Wool, then chief of the Eastern Department, and in the following March was promoted to a captaincy of the Second cavalry. In 1859 he held the captaincy of Company E of that regiment, ranking No. 8 in the list of United States cavalry captains. He held the same position in 1860, and in 1861 ranked No. 7 in the list of the captains of the cavalry in consequence of the promotion of Joseph E. Johnston (now a rebel) to a brigadier generalship. On the 31st of May, 1861, he was promoted to be a major of the Second (now Fourth) United States cavalry, and on the 13th of August, 1861, was promoted a Brigadier General of Volunteers and chief of cavalry on Major General McClellan's staff. He has since been made an Acting Major General, with the command of the whole of the cavalry forces of the Army of the Potomac. He outranks General Smith only by being first named on the army roll, and not by any difference in the date of his commission.

The Latest News from the Army.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, NEAR WILLIAMSBURG, May 4—A. M.

It commenced raining about two o'clock this morning and has continued heavily up to this time.

There is no news from Williamsburg, as it is yet too early in the morning to hear.

We will occupy Williamsburg early this morning. From there our course will depend upon that taken by the enemy.

PARTICULARS OF THE EVACUATION.

Special Correspondence of the New York Herald.

YORKTOWN, May 4, 1862.

This morning, soon after six o'clock, Brigadier General Johnston, having learned that the enemy had evacuated Yorktown, went forward with detachments from different regiments and occupied the deserted earthworks. The Stars and Stripes were raised on the deserted fortifications amid the unbounded enthusiasm of our soldiers. The most reliable information I have been enabled to receive shows that the evacuation was commenced on Thursday last. The last of the rebel force, consisting of General Longstreet's brigade, left the works about one o'clock this morning.

DEMONSTRATIONS OF THE ENEMY DURING THE EVACUATION.

The general idea prevalent in the rebel army was that the Union army was about to attack them on the morning of the 4th inst.

weather was dull and cloudy, rain falling a portion of the time. It was exceedingly difficult to observe any of the enemy's movements, by reason of the heavy condition of the atmosphere. Success in any undertaking depends, to some extent, upon a timely improvement of adventitious circumstances. Such has always been one of the secrets of the enemy's success. In several instances since the commencement of the rebellion he has displayed the power to seize upon and improve favorable opportunities. And so he took advantage of the dull, dark, dreary weather of the past few days for the evacuation of his position, which was universally believed, from what had been said concerning it, to be all but absolutely impregnable. On Wednesday last there was firing from different directions going on all day. The enemy threw a number of his largest shot and shell over from the immense fortification which overlooks the river. Although these missiles flew all around us, some falling in the camps and some passing over them, there were only a few slight casualties among our men. After the rain had commenced to fall in the afternoon the firing was increased. Up to this time it was principally confined to the right of our line, from which our battery of five hundred-pound Parrotts guns and one two hundred-pounder, situated near the river, had returned the brisk fire of the enemy. Thus there had been quite a cannonade. Finding that our guns were proving so effective, several other troops commenced their heavy firing over the fortifications, and others, as I have perceived this morning, having knicked away portions of the parapet, and dismounted one of the heaviest guns, the enemy concluded to relax his efforts in that direction and turn his attention to another quarter. Then, later in the afternoon, between three and four o'clock, we heard cannonading to our left, and it was evident that it was the intention of the enemy, if possible, to divert our attention for the time being from his formidable post to the right.

On Thursday, the 1st of May, the enemy sent forward a small detachment of infantry, the Mississippi Rifles, to keep up appearances and create the impression of a fight. He intended to fight, while subsequent events have shown us that he was afraid to fight, and had determined to silently evacuate. Everything was remarkably quiet during the morning; but both sides resumed their artillery practice in the afternoon. Several of the shells from Yorktown burst in some of our encampments. A premature fire of the weather was blighted later in the day, when the sky clouded over deeper than ever. There was an occasional shot fired during the night.

The morning of Friday, May 2, was dull and dreary, as several of the previous mornings had been. Soon, however, a gentle breeze arose, the sombre covering of clouds parted like curtains drawn aside, revealing a clear, beautiful sky. From early in the morning, for several hours, the enemy kept up a rather regular and constant fire from his heavy guns, as before. Many shots were sent from the left of the fortifications surrounding the town itself, and as our men were busily engaged in running the parallel on our extreme right, near the river, it was supposed that he had brought a number of field pieces to a favorable position outside his works, and was endeavoring to enfilade our parallel. Our battery, number one, near the bank of the river, returned the fire, and made some splendid shots, a number of the shells having been seen to burst over the enemy's intrenchments. Still he kept up the cannonade with like undiminished ardor, revealing a clear, beautiful sky. 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